

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Please amend claims 1, 4 and 5, and add new claims 6-13. A complete listing of all of the claims with parenthetical indication of the current status is provided as follows.

1. (Currently Amended) A tape drive apparatus comprising:

tape-oriented recording and/or reproducing means for recording and/or reproducing information to and/or from a magnetic tape housed in a tape cassette furnished as a recording medium, said tape cassette being loaded in the apparatus;

memory accessing means for accessing a memory which may be incorporated in said tape cassette separately from said magnetic tape, said memory holding furnished as said recording medium and which holds management information for write and/or read operations to and/or from said magnetic tape, said memory accessing means writing and/or reading information to and/or from said memory following the accessing;

information acquiring means for acquiring conditional information from said magnetic tape by causing said tape-oriented recording and/or reproducing means to reproduce from the tape said conditional information, said conditional information indicating whether a memory priority mode is present, said memory priority mode indicating that said management information from said memory must be examined before indicating whether it is mandatory to use said management information in said memory upon writing and/or reading information to and/or from said magnetic tape; and

operation controlling means which, based at least on consistency between specifics of the acquired conditional information and a result of suitable access to said memory by said memory

accessing means when said memory priority mode is present, controls a write and/or a read operation on said magnetic tape.

2. (Original) A tape drive apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said operation controlling means determines, as a result of said access to said memory, specifics of type identification information which is held in said memory and which indicates a type of the loaded recording medium.

3. (Original) A tape drive apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said operation controlling means determines, as a result of said access to said memory, whether said memory inside said tape cassette has said management information stored thereon in a valid format.

4. (Currently Amended) A recording and/or reproducing method for use with a tape drive apparatus, the method comprising the steps of:

recording and/or reproducing information to and/or from a magnetic tape housed in a tape cassette furnished as a recording medium, said tape cassette being loaded in the apparatus; accessing a memory which may be included in said tape cassette separately from said magnetic tape, said memory holding furnished as said recording medium and which holds management information for write and/or read operations to and/or from said magnetic tape, said memory accessing step writing and/or reading information to and/or from said memory following the accessing;

acquiring conditional information from said magnetic tape by causing said recording and/or reproducing step to reproduce from the tape said conditional information, said conditional information indicating whether a memory priority mode is present, said memory priority mode

indicating that said management information from said memory must be examined before indicating whether it is mandatory to use said management information in said memory upon writing and/or reading information to and/or from said magnetic tape; and

based at least on consistency between specifics of the acquired conditional information and a result of suitable access to said memory in said memory accessing step when said memory priority mode is present, controlling a write and/or a read operation on said magnetic tape.

5. (Currently Amended) A recording medium furnished as a tape cassette equipped with a memory and housing a magnetic tape to and/or from which to write and/or read information;

wherein said magnetic tape has a predetermined area for accommodating conditional information, said conditional information indicating whether a memory priority mode is present, said memory priority mode indicating that management information from a memory separate from said magnetic tape must be examined before indicating whether it is mandatory to use management information which is held in said memory and which serves to manage writing and/or reading of information to and/or from said magnetic tape upon said writing and/or said reading to and/or from said magnetic tape.

6. (New) The tape drive apparatus of claim 1, wherein the operation controlling means accommodates an illegitimate cartridge sequence where it is determined that the memory is absent and the memory priority mode is present.

7. (New) The tape drive apparatus of claim 1, wherein the operation controlling means accommodates a normal cartridge sequence where it is determined that the memory is absent and the memory priority mode is absent.

8. (New) The tape drive apparatus of claim 1, wherein the operation controlling means accommodates an illegitimate cartridge sequence where it is determined that the memory is present, the memory priority mode is present, and that there is an inconsistency between the management information on the memory and the magnetic tape.

9. (New) The tape drive apparatus of claim 1, wherein the operation controlling means accommodates a special cartridge sequence where it is determined that the memory is present, the memory priority mode is present, and a consistency between the management information in the memory and the magnetic tape indicates that a special cartridge category is applicable.

10. (New) The method of claim 4, further comprising:
performing an illegitimate cartridge sequence where it is determined that the memory is absent and the memory priority mode is present.

11. (New) The method of claim 4, further comprising:
performing a normal cartridge sequence where it is determined that the memory is absent and the memory priority mode is absent.

12. (New) The method of claim 4, further comprising:
performing an illegitimate cartridge sequence where it is determined that the memory is present, the memory priority mode is present, and that there is an inconsistency between the management information on the memory and the magnetic tape.

13. (New) The method of claim 4, further comprising:

performing a special cartridge sequence where it is determined that the memory is present, the memory priority mode is present, and a consistency between the management information in the memory and the magnetic tape indicates that a special cartridge category is applicable.